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# **MEETING HOUSE ECHOES** Edith A. O'Leary Senior Center

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**Winter 2010 - Volume 15**

**North Reading, MA 01864**

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**Dept. of Elder Affairs**

Tel: 978-664-5600

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Email: mprenney@north  
readingma.gov

**Senior Center**

157 Park Street

Third Meeting House  
on the Common

**Senior Center Hours:**

Mon.-Thur. 8am-4pm

Fri. 8am-1pm

**Director**

Mary S. Prenney

**Clerk**

Mark Meehl

**Pgm. Mgr.** Jean Fitzgerald

**Van Drivers**

Marty Dickman

Mechele Cronin

**Meal Site Manager**

Linda Crowe

**Home Delivered Meals**

**Driver**

Brenda Bugden

**Council on Aging Board**

Jim Beggan, Chair

Gloria Mastro, Secretary

Ed Broughton, V. Chair

Eleanor Fritsch

Atty. Brian Snell

**Representatives to**

**Council on Aging**

Joseph Veno,

Selectman

Sgt. Mark Zimmerman,

N. R. Police Department

Captain Barry Galvin,

N. R. Fire Department

**Friends of the COA**

**Officers**

Angela Mauceri, Pres.

Barbara Thomas, V.Pres.

Tom DeSwarte, Treas.

Shirley Miller, Sec'y

**COUNCIL ON AGING MISSION STATEMENT**

The Council on Aging advocates for older adults by helping to meet their needs in areas of health, economic, social and cultural welfare. The Council encourages maximum independence and seeks to improve the quality of life of citizens of the Town of North Reading.

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***From the Director — Mary Prenney***

It was a long and joyous Holiday Season at the O'Leary Senior Center. Now, all the Christmas cookies and homemade fudge have been eaten, the holiday decorations are put away, and our walls are now decorated with fantastic photographs by our talented, local artist Kris Thomas. Our food pantry donations bins could be a bit fuller (hint!), but our exercise classes have grown (perhaps due to all those cookies and fudge!).

I'm told by some that this is the best time of the year at the Senior Center. A quiet cup of coffee or lunch with friends, a lively game of cards, or taking a class or one of our special programs make the long days of winter seem not so long. It's especially inviting when you know you can be picked up at your door, and not have to worry about shoveling out the driveway (that seems to get longer every year!). To those of you who haven't come by for a visit lately, please do...it's warm here, and the coffee's free!

***From the Editor — Katharine Barr***

By the time you receive this, we will be deep in the heart of winter. And as we get older, we don't always appreciate the cold, the snow and the wind. But as I write this (from the warmth of my home office!), snow is gently falling, preparing us for a beautiful White Christmas!

During our sometimes house-bound weeks of winter, this is a great opportunity to do those things we never have time for, when the weather's great and we want to be outside...read that book your son gave you last year, learn to crochet again, re-connect with an old friend — even (finally) clean out the hall closet! The important thing is to stay well and stay busy. And before you know it, the balmy breezes of Spring will be blowing, daffodils will be blooming, and the birds will be back!

**Congratulations** — to Tim Callahan, North Reading's Veterans Agent, on his retirement. We thank him for his 38 years of dedicated service to our veterans, past and present. We will miss you, Tim!

***Our goal is to help North Reading Elders age safely in place with dignity and independence in the homes and community they helped build...because there is no place like home!!!***

## DINING AND TRANSPORTATION

### Senior Dining at the Center

Mon. — Fri., noon, \$1.50 donation  
(Call before 10:30AM the day before)

### Home Delivered Meals

(formerly Meals on Wheels)  
Mystic Valley Elder Services  
(781) 324-7705, Ext. 300

### FREE Van Transportation

In town, for medical appointments,  
shopping, local errands, Senior Center  
Family Medical Center, Wilmington  
Lahey Satellite Clinic, Wilmington

(Call one day ahead to arrange a ride)

### The following Senior Center Programs are FREE unless otherwise noted

## HEALTH & WELLNESS

### • Blood Pressure Screening

Mondays 1PM — no appointment needed  
At Edith A. O'Leary Senior Center  
1st Thurs. 1:30-2:30PM  
At Common Room, Peabody Court

### • BEST — *Pat Brennan, Instructor*

(Balance Energy Strength Training)  
Meets 9AM Monday mornings and works toward  
strong bones, energized muscles, better balance.

### • Exercise — *Emma Palmer, Instructor*

Meets 9:30AM Tuesdays and Thursdays, and  
involves gentle stretching, toning, strengthening.

### • SHINE (Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders)

A counselor is available every Tuesday afternoon  
— by appointment only — to help answer ques-  
tions and fill out applications.

• **Elder Care Advisor** — *Michelle DerVatanian*  
from Mystic Valley Elder Services is available — by  
appointment only — to offer information, advice  
and education in confidential setting, to elders  
and their families.

• **Assistance with Fuel Oil and Food Stamp  
(SNAP) Applications** is available at the Center —  
call for an appointment.

## ALSO AVAILABLE AT THE CENTER:

### • Card Games

Tuesdays & Thursdays 1:00PM

### • Bingo

Wednesdays 1:15PM

### • Senior Chorus — *Marcia Cutlip, Director*

Mondays 10:30AM. Singing is good for  
mind, body and soul!

**Senior Center Trips – call Pauline Geleas (978)  
664-2976 to reserve.**

*Mobegan Sun Casino and St. Paddy's Celebration*  
"Sham Rocked" at the Cornerstone Playhouse.  
Thursday, March 11. \$66 per person includes  
motor coach (departs Wal-Mart 7:30AM), \$15 free  
bet coupon, \$15 food coupon, driver's gratuity.  
Payment due on reservation.

*Bread & Chocolate Tour.* Thursday, April 8. We visit  
the When Pigs Fly Bakery in Kittery, Maine, enjoy a  
scrumptious buffet lunch at the historic Dunstan  
School House, and finish with a visit to Len Libby's  
Chocolates in Scarborough, ME. \$50 each (incl. driver's  
gratuity). Motor coach leaves Wal-Mart at 9:30AM.  
Payment due on reservation.

*Washington, DC,* May 14-17. 4 days in our nation's  
capital. Call for more information.

### Pancake Breakfasts

Join us every 2nd and 4th Friday at 9AM for a deli-  
cious pancake breakfast. Includes OJ, yummy pan-  
cakes with syrup, sausages and bottomless cup of  
coffee or tea. The speaker for January 22nd will be  
Susan Gauthier from the Arthritis Foundation. Cost  
is just \$3.00 and it's open to the public, so bring a  
friend! Call for a reservation.

**Monthly "Day of Beauty"** at Northeast Vocational  
School, Wakefield. This special treat includes trans-  
portation, shampoo, blow dry or set, manicure and  
facial for just \$10 (additional services available for  
an additional fee), plus lunch in the school's  
restaurant for an additional \$5 - \$10. Dates are  
Tuesdays, Jan. 26, Feb. 9, March 9, Apr. 13, May 11  
and June 8. Reservations are a must – call (978)  
664-5600.

**Food Pantry donations are low,** and the number of  
local families being served grows every week.  
Please drop off non-perishable items (food, plus  
paper goods, dish detergent, etc.) at the Senior  
Center.

## NEWS FROM MYSTIC VALLEY ELDER SERVICES:

### *Tickets are on sale now for My Fair Lady!*

Individual tickets are now on sale for MVES' annual fundraiser at the Stoneham Theater. This year's show — the delightful musical *My Fair Lady* — will be performed on Sat., April 10, 2010 at 8PM. Tickets are \$50 each. All proceeds support MVES' Gap Fund, an endowment that helps community elders who don't qualify for government-run programs. For more information, or to purchase tickets, call MVES' Development Office at (781) 324-7705.

### **MVES is Here to Help!**

Mystic Valley Elder Services (MVES) is a non-profit organization that provides information and services to elders, caregivers, and individuals with disabilities. Our services are focused on helping elders live safely and independently in the setting of their choice. We are a one-stop resource for elder care information, advice, services, and solutions for anyone...regardless of age or income. Please call 781-324-7705 or visit [www.mves.org](http://www.mves.org).

### **Scam Alert!**

If someone comes to the door, claiming he's been hired by your neighbor to cut down some trees, but some of them appear to be on your property, and would you come out to confirm this — DO NOT follow him, leaving your door wide open. His partner (sitting in the truck) will immediately rush into the house and rob you. If anyone approaches you with a suspicious request, contact the N. Reading Police immediately at (978) 664-3131.

### **Celebrating a Birthday? Celebrate With Us!**

Call the Center and let us know when you're about to have a birthday. Then come and enjoy a delicious lunch — FREE! We might even sing "Happy Birthday" to you!

### **Dial 2-1-1 for FREE Health Information.**

211 is the national dialing code that provides access to health and human services information, free of charge. This valuable program also has access to updated disaster information (storms, fires, power outages, etc.), post-disaster programs, interpreter services, and acts as the registration site for volunteers and donations from the public during an emergency or crisis.

### **Save These Dates:**

Jan. 21	New Year's Party with Mark Stanzler
Feb. 11	Valentine's Party with Denise Doucette
Mar. 17	St. Patrick's Party with Frank Paolini
Apr. 12	Spring Fling with Ted Powers
May 1	Town-wide Yard Sale (details to come)

### **Cold Weather Won't Make You Sick!**

Here are a couple of cold weather myths, courtesy of the AARP Bulletin:

• **Most of your body heat is lost through your head.** Untrue. Body heat is lost through whatever part of your body is uncovered. So — bundle up, COMPLETELY!

• **Illnesses come from cold or wet weather.** Untrue. Colds and flu come from viruses. Some viruses are more common in the winter. Plus, chilly or rainy weather can result in more people staying inside — and then sharing their icky infections!

### **Warm Thanks to Our Basket Donors!**

We are very fortunate that each month, one of our "friends" donates a beautiful basket of "goodies" for us to raffle off. For the past three months, we especially thank:

Molly Leonard — October  
Billie Downing — November  
Sally Hines — December

Call the Center if you would like to put together a basket.

### **And Thanks Also To:**

The Washington Street Dunkin' Donuts, Meadowview Rehabilitation Center, and the Carpe Diem Grandma's, who did an outstanding job decorating the Center for the holidays!

### **Project Linus Is Going Strong — Join Us!**

The Greater Boston Chapter of Project Linus is part of a national organization of volunteers who create handmade blankets to give to seriously ill or traumatized children ages infant-18. Join us at 10AM on the first Friday of the month at the Center, to knit, crochet or sew a Linus "security" blanket! It's great fun for a great cause!

## HELP FOR HAITI!

Haiti is the poorest nation in the Western Hemisphere, constantly struggling with poverty and disease. And now, in an extraordinarily cruel blow, the capital city of Port-au-Prince has been virtually leveled by a 7.0 earthquake. Thousands are dead; many thousands more are injured, starving, and homeless.

Americans are well-known for their compassion. If you would like to help these desperate people, there are many organizations — totally reputable charities — who will use every donation, however modest, to provide critical food, water, medicines, and shelter to those who need it most. Among them are the American Red Cross, The Salvation Army, Oxfam America, Doctors Without Borders, and Habitat for Humanity. There are many others — perhaps you have a favorite charity that you already support. And many churches are accepting donations through their congregations. Be sure to earmark your check for Haiti Relief.

The need is overwhelming. Whatever you can do will be a blessing!

## H1N1 Shots Available!

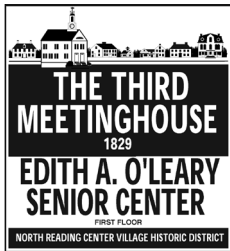
There's still plenty of flu season left — after all, it's only January! If you haven't gotten the H1N1 flu shot yet, it is going to be available for any senior who wants it. Call the Senior Center at (978) 664-5600 for dates and times.

If you are allergic to eggs, you should first check with your Primary Care Physician, as the vaccine is incubated in eggs. Protect your health, and that of the people around you — get your flu shot!

## Just for fun —

*I signed up for an aerobics class for seniors. I bent, twisted, gyrated, jumped up and down and perspired for an hour. But, by the time I got my leotard on, the class was over!*

*Life isn't tied with a bow, but it's still a gift.*



**NORTH READING ELDER AFFAIRS  
157 PARK STREET  
NORTH READING, MA 01864**